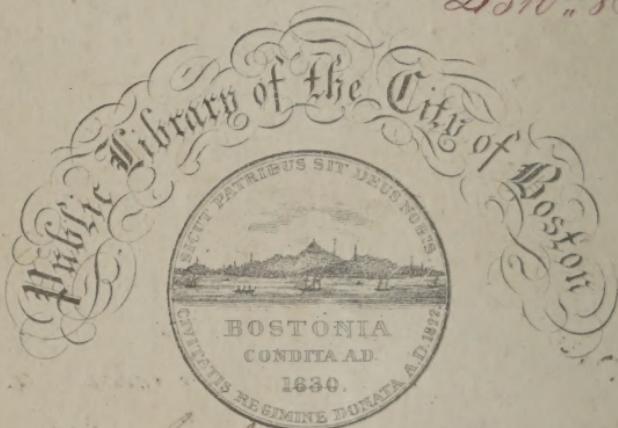




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Mr. W. Greenough,  
from S. Eliot.



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The Republic and its Crisis.

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# SPEECHES

OF

HON. EDWARD EVERETT,

AT THE

BOSTON UNION MEETING, DEC. 8, 1858;

AND OF

EX-GOV. THOS. H. SEYMOUR,

AND

PROF. SAMUEL ELIOT,

OF TRINITY COLLEGE,

AT THE

HARTFORD UNION MEETING, DEC. 14, 1859.

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PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF MANY OF THE CONSERVATIVE AND  
UNION LOVING MEN OF CONNECTICUT.

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JANUARY, 1860.



# SPEECH

OF THE

## HON. EDWARD EVERETT,

AT THE

UNION MEETING, BOSTON, MASS., DEC. 8, 1859.

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MR. CHAIRMAN AND FELLOW-CITIZENS:

In rising to address you on this important occasion, indulge me in a few words of personal explanation. I did not suppose that anything could occur which would make me think it my duty to appear again on this platform, on any occasion of a political character; and had this meeting been of a party nature, or designed to promote any party purposes, I should not have been here. When compelled by the prostration of my health five years ago to resign the distinguished place which I then filled in the public service, it was with no expectation, no wish, and no intention of ever again mingling in the scenes of public life. I have, accordingly, with the partial restoration of my health, abstained from all participation in political action of any kind; partly because I have found a more congenial, and, as I venture to think, a more useful occupation in seeking to rally the affections of my countrymen, North and South, to that great name and precious memory which is left almost alone of all the numerous kindly associations which once bound the different sections of the country together (applause); and, also, because, between the extremes of opinion that have long distracted and now threaten to convulse the country, I find no middle ground of practical usefulness on which a friend of moderate counsels can stand. I think I do a little good—I try to—in my waning years, in augmenting the funds of the charitable institutions, commemorating from time to time the honored dead and the great events of past days, and chiefly in my humble efforts to rescue from desecration and the vicissitudes of private property the home and the grave of Washington. (Applause.) These, sir, seem to one to be innocent and appropriate occupations for the decline of life. I am more than contented with the favor with which these my humble labors are regarded by the great majority of my countrymen; and, knowing by experience how unsatisfying in the enjoyment are the bright

est prizes of political ambition, I gladly resign the pursuit of them to younger men. Sir, the North and the South, including the Northwest and Southwest, have become fiercely, bitterly arrayed against each other. There is no place left in public life for those who love them both. The war of words—of the press, of the platform, of the State Legislatures, and, must I add, the pulpit—has been pushed to a point of exasperation which, on the slightest untoward accident, may rush to the bloody arbitrament of the sword. The great ancient master of political science (Aristotle) tells us, that though revolutions do not take place *for* small causes, they do *from* small causes. He means, sir, that when the minds of the community have become hopelessly embittered and exasperated by long continued irritation, the slightest occurrence will bring on the catastrophe. In fact, it seems to me that we have reached a state of things which requires all good men and good patriots to forego for a time all mere party projects and calculations, and to abandon all ordinary political issues; which calls, in a word, upon all who love the country and cherish the Union, and desire the continuance of those blessings which we have till lately enjoyed under the Constitution transmitted to us by our fathers, and which I regard as the noblest work of political wisdom ever achieved, to meet as one man and take counsel for its preservation. (Applause.) It is this feeling that has brought me here to-day. It will probably be said, sir, that those who entertain views like these exaggerate the gravity of the crisis. I wish I could think so. But I fear it is not we who exaggerate, but those who differ from us, that greatly—and soon, I fear it will be, fatally—underrate the ominous signs of the times. I fear, sir, that they are greatly misled by the one-sided views, exclusively presented by the party press and those who rely upon the party press exclusively for their impressions, and that they are dangerously ignorant of the state of opinion and feeling in the other great section of the country. (Applause.) I greatly fear that the mass of the community, long accustomed to treat all alarm for the stability of the Union as groundless, all professed anxiety for its preservation as insincere, or, if sincere, the result of nervous timidity, have unfitted themselves to measure the extent and the urgency of the existing danger. It is my own deliberate conviction, formed from some opportunities of personal observation, and from friendly correspondence with other parts of the country, (though I carry on none of a political nature,) that we are on the very verge of a convulsion which will shake the Union to its foundation; and that a few more steps forward, in the direction in which affairs have moved for a few years past, will bring us to the catastrophe. I have heard it urged on former occasions of public alarm, that it must be groundless, because business goes on as usual, and the theatres are open and stocks keep up. Sir, these appearances may all be delusive. The great social machine moves with a momentum that cannot be suddenly stopped. The ordinary operations of bus-

iness went on in France, in the revolution of 1789, till the annihilation of the circulating medium put a stop to everything that required its use. The theatres and all the other places of public amusement were crowded to madness in the Reign of Terror. The French stocks never stood better than they did in Paris on the 21st of February, 1848. On the 24th of that month Louis Phillippe was flying in disguise from his capital ; the Tuilleries were sacked, and the oldest monarchy in Europe had ceased to exist. I hold it to be time then, sir, as I have said, for good men and good patriots, casting aside all mere party considerations, and postponing at least all ordinary political issues, to pause, to look steadily in the face the condition of things to which we are approaching ; and to ask their own consciences whether they can do nothing to avert the crisis, and bring about a happier and better state of things. (Applause.) I do not ask them to search the past for topics of reproach or recrimination on men or parties. We have had enough of that ; and it has contributed materially to bring about our present perilous condition. In all countries where speech and the press are free, especially those countries which by controlling natural causes fall into two great sections, each possessing independent local Legislatures and centres of opinion and influence, there will in the lapse of time unavoidably be action and re-action of word and deed.— Violence of speech or of act, on the one side, will unavoidably produce violence of speech and of act on the other. Each new grievance is alternately cause and effect ; and if, before resorting to healing counsels, we are determined to run over the dreary catalogue to see who was earliest or who has been most to blame, we engage in a controversy in which there is no arbiter, and of which there can be no solution.

But, without reviving the angry or sorrowful memories of the past, let me, in all friendliness, ask the question—What has either section to gain by a dissolution of the Union, with reference to that terrible question which threatens to destroy it ? I ask patriotic men in both sections to run over in their minds the causes of complaint which they have, or think they have, in the existing state of things, and then ask themselves dispassionately whether anything is to be gained, anything to be hoped, by pushing the present alienation to that fatal bourne, from which, as from death, there is no return ? Will the South gain any greater stability for her social system, any larger entrance into the vacant public territories ? Will the North have effected any one object which, by men of any shade of opinion, extreme or moderate, is deemed desirable ; on the contrary, will not every evil she desires to remedy be confirmed and aggravated ? If this view of the subject be correct, what can be more unwise—what more suicidal than to allow these deplorable dissensions to result in a revolution, which will leave two great sections of the country in a worse condition than it finds them with reference to the very objects for which they allow themselves to be

impelled to the dreadful consummation. (Applause.) But I shall be told perhaps that all this is imaginary—that the alarm at the South is factitious, or rather a groundless panic, for which there is no substantial cause—fit subjects for ridicule rather than serious anxiety. But I see no signs of panic in Virginia, except for a few hours at Harper's Ferry, when in the confusion of the first surprise, and in profound ignorance of the extent of the danger, the community was for a short time paralyzed. I am not sure that a town of four or five hundred families in this region, invaded at midnight by a resolute band of twenty men, entering the houses of influential citizens, and hurrying them from their beds to a stronghold previously occupied, and there holding them as hostages—I am not sure, sir, that an equal panic would not be created till the extent of the danger was measured. Besides, sir, if the panic had been much more extensive than it was, the panics of great and brave communities are no trifles. Burke said he could not frame an indictment against a whole people; it seems to me equally in bad taste at least to try to point a sneer at a State like Virginia. The French are reputed a gallant and warlike people; but the letters from the late seat of war tells us, that even after the great victory of Solferino, a handful of Austrians, straggling into a village, put a corps of the French army—thousands strong—to flight. A hundred and fifty men overturned the French monarchy, on the occasion to which I have already alluded, in 1848. When the circumstances of the case are taken into consideration, I suspect it will be agreed that any other community in the country similarly situated would have been affected in the same way. (Applause.) A conflict of such an unprecedented character, in which twelve or fourteen persons on the two sides are shot down in the course of a few hours, appears to me an event at which levity ought to stand rebuked, and a solemn chill to fall upon every right thinking man. I fear, sir, from the tone of some of the public journals, that we have not made this case our own. Suppose a party of desperate, misguided men, under a resolved and fearless leader, had been organized in Virginia to come and establish themselves by stealth in Springfield, in this State, intending there, after possessing themselves at the unguarded hour of midnight of the National Armory, to take advantage of some local cause of disaffection—say the feud between Protestants and Catholics (which led to a very deplorable occurrence in this vicinity a few years ago)—to stir up a social revolution; that pikes and rifles to arm twenty-five hundred men had been procured by funds raised by extensive subscriptions, throughout the South—that at the dead of a Sunday night the work of destruction had begun by shooting down an unarmed man, who had refused to join the invading force; that citizens of the first standing were seized and imprisoned, three or four others killed, and when, on the entire failure of the conspiracy, its leader had been tried, ably defended by counsel from his own part of the

country, convicted and executed, that throughout Virginia—which sent him forth on his fatal errand—and the South generally, funeral bells should be tolled, meetings of sympathy held, as at the death of some great benefactor, and the person who had plotted to put a pike or a rifle in the hands of twenty-five hundred men to be used against their fellows, inhabitants of the same town, inmates of the same houses, with an ulterior intention and purpose of wrapping the whole community in civil war of the deadliest and bloodiest type, in which a man's foes should be those of his own household; suppose, I say, the person who planned and plotted this, and with his own hand or that of his associates acting by his command, had taken the lives of several fellow beings should be extolled, canonized, placed on a level with the great heroes of humanity, nay assimilated to the Saviour of mankind, and all this not the effect of a solitary individual impulse, but the ripe fruit of a systematic agitation pursued in the South, unrebuked for years! what, sir, should we feel, think, say, under such a state of things? Should we weigh every phrase of indignant remonstrance with critical accuracy, and divide our murmurs with nice discrimination among those whom we might believe, however unjustly, to be directly or indirectly concerned in the murderous aggression? Mr. Chairman, those who look upon the existing excitement at the South as factitious or extravagant, have, I fear, formed a very inadequate idea of the nature of such an attempt as that which was made at Harper's Ferry was intended to be, and would have been had it proved successful. It is to want of reflection on this point that we must ascribe the fact—that any civilized man in his right mind, and still more any man of intelligence and moral discernment in other respects, can be found to approve and sympathize with it. (Applause.) I am sure if such persons will bring home to their minds, in any distinct conception, the real nature of the undertaking, they would be themselves amazed that they had ever given it their sympathy. It appears from his own statements and those of his deluded associates, of his biographer, of his wretched wife, that the unhappy man who had just paid the forfeit of his life, had for years meditated a general insurrection in the Southern States; that he thought the time had now come to effect it; that the slaves were ready to rise and the non-slaveholding whites to join them; and, both united, were ready to form a new commonwealth, of which the constitution was organized and the officers chosen. With this wild, but thoroughly matured plan, he provides weapons for those on whose rising he calculated at Harper's Ferry; he seizes the national arsenal, where there was a supply of arms for a hundred thousand men; and he intended, if unable to maintain himself at once in the open country, to retreat to the mountains, and from their fastnesses harass, paralyze, and at length revolutionize the South.

To talk of the pikes and rifles not being intended for offensive purposes is simply absurd. (Applause.) The first act almost of the party was to shoot down a free colored man, whom they were attempting to impress, and who fled from them. One might as well say that the rifled ordnance of Louis Napoleon was intending only for self-defence, to be used only in case the Austrians should undertake to arrest his march. (Loud applause.) No, sir; it was an attempt to do on a vast scale what was done in St. Domingo in 1791, where the colored population was about equal to that of Virginia; and, if any one would form a distinct idea what such an operation is, let him see it,—not as a matter of vague conception—a crude project—in the mind of a heated fanatic, but as it should be in the sober pages of history, that record the revolt in that island; the midnight burnings, the wholesale massacres, the merciless tortures, the abominations not to be named by Christian lips in the hearing of Christian ears—some of which, too unutterably atrocious for the English language, are of necessity veiled in the obscurity of the Latin tongue. Allow me to read you a few sentences from the historian of the these events:—

In the town itself, the general belief for some time was, that the revolt was by no means an extensive one, but a sudden and partial insurrection only. The largest sugar plantation on the plain was that of Mons. Gallifet, situated about eight miles from the town, the negroes belonging to which had always been treated with such kindness and liberality, and possessed so many advantages, that it became a proverbial expression among the lower white people, in speaking of any man's good fortune, to say, *il est heureux comme un negre de Gallifet* (he is as happy as one of M. Gallifet's negroes.) M. Odeluc, an Attorney or Agent for this plantation, was a member of the General Assembly, and, being fully persuaded that the negroes belonging to it would remain firm in their obedience, determined to repair thither to encourage them in opposing the insurgents; to which end he desired the assistance of a few soldiers from the town guard, which was granted him. He proceeded accordingly, but on approaching the estate, to his surprise, he found all the negroes in arms on the side of the rebels, and (horrid to tell) their standard was the body of a white infant, which they had recently impaled on a stake. M. Odeluc had advanced too far to retreat undiscovered and both he and a friend who had accompanied him, with most of the soldiers, were killed without mercy. Two or three only of the patrol escaped by flight, and conveyed the dreadful tidings to the inhabitants of the town.

By this time, all or most of the white persons who had been found on the several plantations, being massacred or forced to seek their safety in flight, the ruffians exchanged the sword for the torch. The buildings and canefields were everywhere set on fire; and the conflagrations which were visible from the town in a thousand different quarters, furnished a prospect more shocking and reflections more dismal than fancy can paint or the powers of man describe.

Such, sir, as a matter of history, is a servile insurrection. Now let us take a glance at the state of things in the Southern States, co-members as they are with us in the great Republican Confederacy. Let us consider over what sort of a population it is that some persons among us think it not only right and commendable, but in the highest degree heroic, saintlike, God-like, to extend the awful calamity which turned St. Domingo into a heap of bloody ashes in 1791. There are between three and four millions of the colored race scattered through the Southern and Southwestern States, in small groups in cities, towns, villiages, and in larger bodies on isolated plantations; in the house, the factory, and the

field ; mingled together with the dominant race in the various pursuits of life ; the latter amounting in the aggregate to eight or nine millions, if I rightly recollect the numbers. Upon this community, thus composed, it was the design of Brown to let loose the hell hounds of a servile insurrection, and to bring on a struggle which—for magnitude, atrocity, and horror, would have stood alone in the history of the world. (Applause.) And these eight or nine millions, against whom this frightful war was levied, are our fellow-citizens, entitled with us to the protection of that Compact of Government, which recognises their relation to the colored race—a compact which every sworn officer of the Union or of the States is bound by his oath to support. Among them, sir, is a fair proportion of men and women of education and culture—of moral and religious lives and characters—virtuous fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, persons who would adorn any station of society in any country—men who read the same Bible that we do, and in the name of the same Master, kneel at the throne of the same God, forming a class of men from which have gone forth some of the greatest and purest characters which adorn our history : Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Marshall. These are the men, the women, for whose bosoms pikes and rifles are manufactured in New England, to be placed in the hands of an ignorant and subject race, supposed, most wrongfully, as recent events have shown, to be waiting for an opportunity to use them. (Applause.) Sir, I have on three or four different occasions in early life, and more recently, visited all the Southern and Southwestern States, with the exception of Arkansas and Alabama. I have enjoyed the hospitality of the city and the country ; I have had the privilege, before crowded and favoring audiences, to hold up the character of the father of his country, and to inculcate the blessings of the Union, in the same precise terms in which I have done it here at home, and in the other portions of the land. I have been admitted to the confidence of the domestic circle, and I have seen there touching manifestations of the kindest feelings, by which that circle, in all its members, high and low, master and servant, can be bound together ; and, when I contemplate the horrors that would have ensued had the tragedy on which the curtain rose at Harper's Ferry been acted out, through all its scenes of fire and sword, of lust and murder, of rapine and desolation to the final catastrophe, I am filled with emotions to which no words can do justice.—There could of course be but one result, and that well deserving the thoughtful meditation of those, if any such there be, who think that the welfare of the colored race could by any possibility be promoted by the success of such a movement, and who are willing to purchase that result by so costly a sacrifice.—The colored population of St. Domingo amounted to but little short of half a million, while the whites amounted to only thirty thousand. The white population of the Southern States alone, in the aggregate outnumbers the colored race in the ratio of two to one ;

in the Union at large in the ratio of seven to one, and if (which heaven avert) they should be brought into conflict, it could end only in the extermination of the latter after scenes of woe, for which language is too faint, and for which the liveliest fancy has no adequate images of horror.

Such being the case, some one may ask, why does not the South fortify herself against the possible occurrence of such a catastrophe by doing away with the one great source from which alone it can spring? This is a question easily asked, and I am not aware that it is our duty at the North to answer it; but it may be observed that great and radical changes in the framework of society, involving the relations of twelve millions of men, will not wait on the bidding of an impatient philanthropy. They can only be brought about in the lapse of time, by the steady operation of physical, economical, and moral causes. Have those, who rebuke the South for the continuance of slavery, considered that neither the present generation nor the preceding one is responsible for its existence? The African slave trade was prohibited by act of Congress fifty-one years ago, and many years earlier by the separate Southern States. The entire colored population, with the exception perhaps of a few hundreds surreptitiously introduced, is native to the soil. Their ancestors were conveyed from Africa in the ships of Old England and New England. (Loud applause.) They now number between three and four millions. Has any person, of any party or opinion, proposed, in sober earnest, a practical method of wholesale emancipation? I believe most persons, in all parts of the country, are of opinion that free labor is steadily gaining ground. It would in my judgement have already prevailed in the two northern tiers of the slaveholding States, had its advances not been unhappily retarded by the irritating agitations of the day. (Loud applause.)—But has any person, whose opinion is entitled to the slightest respect, ever undertaken to sketch out the details of a plan for affecting the change at once, by any legislative measure that could be adopted? Consider only, I pray you, that it would be to ask the South to give up one thousand millions of property, which she holds by a title satisfactory to herself, as the first step. Then estimate the cost of an adequate outfit for the self support of the emancipated millions; then reflect on the derangement of the entire industrial system of the South, and all the branches of commerce and manufactures that depend on its great staples; then the necessity of conferring equal political privileges on the emancipated race, who being free would be content with nothing less, if anything less were consistent with our political system; then the consequent organization of two great political parties on the basis of color, and the eternal feud which would rage between them; and finally, the overflow into the free States of a vast multitude of needy and helpless emigrants, who being excluded from many of them (and among others from Kansas)—[boisterous laughter]—would prove doubly burdensome, where they are admitted.—

Should we, sir, with all our sympathy for the colored race, give a very cordial reception to two or three hundred thousand destitute emancipated slaves? Does not every candid man see, that every one of these steps presents difficulties of the most formidable character—difficulties for which, as far as I know, no man and no party has proposed a solution? And is it, sir, for the attainment of objects so manifestly impracticable, pursued too by the bloody pathways of treason and murder, that we will allow the stupendous evil which now threatens us, to come upon the country?

Shall we permit this curiously compacted body politic, the nicest adjustment of human wisdom, to go to pieces? (Cries of "No no.") Will we blast this beautiful symmetric form; paralyze this powerful arm of public strength; smite with imbecility this great national intellect? Where, sir, O where will be the flag of the United States? Where our rapidly increasing influence in the family of Nations? Already they are rejoicing in our divisions. The last foreign journal which I have read, in commenting upon the event at Harper's Ferry, dwells upon it as something that "will compel us to keep the peace with the Powers of Europe," and *that* means to take the law from them in our international relations. I meant to have spoken of the wreck of that magnificent and mutually beneficial commercial intercourse which now exists between the producing and manufacturing States—on the hostile tariffs in time of peace, and the habitually recurring border wars by which it will be annihilated. I meant to have said a word of the Navy of the United States, and the rich inheritance of its common glories. Shall we give up this? The memories of our fathers—of those happy days when the men of the North and South stood together for the country, on hard fought fields; when the South sent her Washington to Massachusetts, and New England sent her Greene to Carolina—is all this forgotten? "Is all the counsel that we two have shared;" all the joint labors to found this great Republic—is this "all forgot?" and will we permit this great experiment of confederate republicanism to become a proverb and a by word to the Nations? (Cries of "No, no, never.") No, fellow citizens, no, a thousand times, no. This glorious Union shall not perish. Precious legacy of our fathers, it shall go down honored and cherished to our children. (Loud applause.) Generations unborn shall enjoy its privileges as we have done; and, if we leave them poor in all besides, we will transmit to them the boundless wealth of its blessings. (Loud applause, followed by three cheers.)

Immediately after the conclusion of the Hon. Edward Everett's emphatic denunciation of every tendency to disunion, the immense assembly broke forth into the most rapturous and vehement applause. Nine vociferous cheers were given for the honorable gentleman, followed by the clapping of hands, waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and every demonstration that a sincere people could give of satisfaction and delight.



## REMARKS

OF

EX-GOV. THOS. H. SEYMOUR

AT THE

UNION MEETING, HARTFORD, DEC. 14, 1859.

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*Fellow Citizens:* I would have been more pleased if some other person than myself had been called to preside over this meeting. I say this out of deference to others, seeing gentlemen in the audience who I am sure would give better satisfaction in this position than I can hope to do. Since, however, it is your wish that I should occupy the chair for this evening, I cannot think of declining. I take the opportunity, therefore, of expressing to you my high sense of the honor you have conferred upon me on this occassion, and I tender you in return my sincere acknowledgments.

This is the flrst public meeting of the citizens of Hartford I have had the pleasure of attending in many years. It is a matter of personal gratification to me, that I have that pleasure on the same platform with men of different political parties. I meet you here as friends and countrymen, convinced that there can be no great difference of opinion between us, as to the purposes of this gathering.

I congratulate you, fellow citizens, on the response which has been given to the call for this meeting. The very large number of persons present, attests the interest which is taken in this matter. This is a movement which cannot fail to prove beneficial; its purpose is to uphold and not to destroy. Such was the character of the late meeting in Faneuil Hall, and this is like it. To-night, our friends in New Haven will have a similar demonstration. May we not send to them greeting? Hartford joins with New Haven in devotion to the Constitution and the Laws.

If I were to consult my personal feelings in this moment, I should give way to the gentlemen who are expected to address you this evening. But I cannot immediately resume my seat. I am constrained by a sense of duty to say something further. If I were to let this occasion pass in silence on my part, I should reproach

myself for ever after. I will, therefore, with your permission, go on with my remarks. It is my wish to say at this time what may be deemed pertinent to the business of this meeting, though it should fall short of what is due to the present state of affairs. I would speak plainly of what properly comes before us, in the published notice to which your names are appended. This I would do in hopes I may also in an humble way, render an acceptable service to a worthy cause.

I believe it may be laid down as a fixed fact, that a large proportion of the people of the North, irrespective of party lines, are opposed to any interference with State Rights. They are opposed to any intermeddling with the institution of Slavery in the States where it is found to exist.

Now it is the practical denial of this doctrine by persistent anti-slavery men, taken in connection with results of which I shall say a word in another place, which is fast weakening all the bonds which hold this Union together. Let us see if this be so? For a long series of years the Southern States have been subjected to most unjust attacks from a class of men at the North who constantly harp on Slavery. Abolitionists are at liberty to discuss the slavery question as long as they please, no doubt, or any other they may choose to agitate. But have they the right to cast firebrands into a peaceful community? The attacks I allude to have not only been unjust, but vindictive often, and inflammatory in the highest degree. The authors of all this abuse of Southern institutions may not have recommended the use of improper means for the attainment of their ends; but their teachings have been pernicious.—Constant denunciation of men and things produces its evil consequences after a while. History gives us frightful examples of murders and rapine caused by words rashly or wickedly spoken.

Let us now apply this view of the case to the late disturbances on our Southern border. It is just the state of things I have glanced at, which made John Brown the leader of a band of conspirators. What happened at Harper's Ferry two months ago is the natural sequence of the violent language and dangerous doctrines to which I have alluded. There is no disputing the eternal connection between cause and effect.

I say nothing of the material aid furnished the conspirators, in their descent upon the soil of Virginia:—that is a secret which may never come to light. Let it be buried, if you please, in the graves to which Justice consigns her victims.

You have heard, my friends, over and over again, the account of the insurrectionary doings of the 16th of October last. I am not going to give you a repetition of that midnight foray. Let it never be forgotten, though, that it was the purpose of the guilty men engaged in it to rouse up the negroes of the South to munity and rage, and put arms in their hands *for use!* This means, if it means anything at all, that they were to slay the whites! What if the

plan and succeeded, or even partially succeeded? The mind shrinks with horror from the fearful scenes we should have had no record.

But it is not the late insurrection we need speak of so much as what has since occurred. It was seen, at the very dawn of that outbreak, that it would prove a failure. The negroes did not rise as they were expected to do, nor did the promised aid from abroad come, at the tap of the drum.

What concerns us more deeply now, is the fact, that those who conspired against the peace and integrity of a sovereign State, have their sympathisers at the North, and elsewhere. Is the North to let this go unrebuked? What is sympathy with crime but secret applause of evil deeds?—and if so, what a lesson to others!—what a lesson to the rising generation! The sympathizers would make a martyr of one who has already paid the penalty of the law. I do not very well understand, says a learned Divine, speaking on this question—the separation of the actor from the act. Neither can any of us.

It cannot be denied, fellow-citizens, that there is a bad spirit abroad in our country, which seems all at once, to have assumed gigantic proportions. It is that fell spirit, which makes virtues of high crimes and misdemeanors; which frowns at simple breaches of the peace, whilst it *smiles at massacres!* You have heard it in the tolling bell which mocked at human laws, and marked the blasphemous words which would make the scaffold equal with the Cross of Christ! The things I have brought to your mind are beginning to tell on the people of the South. They find it necessary to cast about them and see if they should not adopt measures independent of the Union, with the view of protecting their borders against the machinations of Northern fanatics. Motives of self-preservation would naturally prompt the adoption of some such rules. The next step might be non-intercourse or something as bad. What would follow, any one may picture to himself. But is it possible to dissolve this Union? I will not vex my heart by answering the question. But one thing I think is certain, if the States South of the Potomac cannot be protected in their Constitutional Rights, the compact is virtually at an end.—Those who think the South may be dragbooned into obedience, in a certain contingency, probably think there is a power in this government to prevent a separation of the States. It is not for me to pronounce judgement in so serious a matter as this, but I will hazard a remark on the subject. This is not strictly a government of force, fellow-citizens, but one of acquiescence, if I may so speak. We are held together, if at all, by mightier agents than ships-of-war, with bolts in their pounces, on flying artillery with their rifled cannon. The future of these States must be determined by nobler means than those which sacrificed Italy on the field of Solferino! A common language, the memory of Revolutionary achievements,

and of later struggles for the honor of the American name; a unity of interests based on an interchange of the products of different States—products of the plow, of the loom, and the work-shop—kept alive through the benign influence of free trade between each other; the remembrance that we are kindred, brethren, and heirs to the same inheritance of countless blessings, and vast renown; these are the cords of love—the ties that bind. If these fail us—if these should prove but as flax in the fire, our fate is sealed! You may fold up the map of the union—it would be needed no longer.—And in such an event who would perform the fearful task of making an equitable distribution of the government effects? how parcel out the paltry treasures of an expiring Nation? how would they divide the public lands? what would be done with the naval works, and ship yards, and floating castles? what States should have old Ironsides, and what the Wabash? or standing over the gulf of disunion, what traitor's hands would rend assunder the National Flag and pronounce the doom of this Republic? These are questions we may take home to our business and bosoms, but we will not yet despair of the Union!

# NATIONAL TOLERATION.

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## REMARKS

AT A

# UNION MEETING, IN HARTFORD, CT.

December 14th, 1859.

BY PROF. SAMUEL ELIOT, OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW-CITIZENS:

I am here for peace. I come to do whatever lies within my power to bind up the wounded limb, to still the passionate outcry, to soothe the angry heart. I have not stayed to enquire into the auspices under which this meeting has been called, or to deliberate upon the propriety of appearing, under any circumstances, in a different scene from that in which I am wont to live and to labor. The call came, and I have responded to it, as one of the great host stretching from Maine to California, and ready to day, as on every day, to "keep step," as my great townsman once said with his accustomed brilliancy, "to the music of the Union." Never may a strain from that full harmony fall upon listless ears; never, as it swells and glows, may it find us insensible to its clarion voices, as they summon us before the shrine at which we have been taught to lay our common offerings. I have but little to bring; but what I have, I bring in the spirit of sacrifice, trusting, nay knowing, that I am not alone, and they who speak and that they who hear, to-night, are making, each his own oblation.

It is no time for any one of us to draw back. We need to take counsel together; if there is danger, to meet it; if there is no danger, to assure ourselves that there is none. In days like these, it is not enough for the leaders to deliberate; the rank and file must come forward, the people, often called sovereign, must assert their sovereignty, put on the robes of council, and take the great interests which belong to them into solemn consideration.

No one who knows this country or these countrymen of ours, can doubt that our institutions are always in a certain sort of peril ; that ignorance, indifference and selfishness are always at our gates, undermining, if they do not openly assail the citadel. But besides these constant approaches of danger and vicissitude, there are occasional out-breaks, sudden threats, unexpected assaults, against which, though we can never be totally unprepared, we may fail to prepare ourselves effectively. Brethren, is there such a movement against us now ? I trust that its importance may be exaggerated, I trust that the peril of the moment, whatever it may be, has been over-estimated. Again and again, the cry has risen, "The Union is in danger !" Again and again, in your hearing, and in mine, the end has been talked of as not far off, and they who deplored the prospect have lamented amid imaginary ruins, as wildly as they who welcomed destruction have exulted in its fancied imminence. Now I may as well confess that I do not believe in the approaching dissolution of the Union. Heaven forbid that I should, or that you should, or that they who talk of it most loudly, should any of them or of us believe, really believe that so terrible a catastrophe is actually upon us, actually opening at our feet, or trembling above our heads ! No, no, Mr. President, to believe in this, is to hasten it ; to believe in this, is to be paralyzed, to be doomed. And why should we believe in it ? Why, when we behold the deep foundations of the Union, should we think them failing ; why, when we gaze up to its massive piers and shining towers, should we imagine them tottering ; why, when we look over the universe, and see that no where, in the vast system of the sun, there exists a broader or a fairer political structure, to reflect the light of day upon those who dwell within its walls, why should we shudder with the thought that these immense proportions, these protecting lines, are to shrink into the dust, and leave a nation defenceless, homeless, hopeless, where it is now so sheltered and so blessed ? If man is weak or frantic, God is Almighty and All-wise.

Still, were we told that the defences behind which we had gathered our household to protect the lives far dearer than our own against a foe, seen or unseen ; were we told that this breastwork, to which we had confided our heart's treasures, were weak or comparatively assailable at any single point, what should we do ? Jeer at the saying, or at him who said it ? Laugh at the idea of weakness in what our instincts warned us must be impregnable ? Or rather turn with nervous solicitude to the suspected spot, to make it surer even if we thought it already sure, and certainly to secure it if we doubted, though not confessing that we doubted, its security ? You have answered my questions more rapidly than I have been able to ask them, and you will join with me, in pledging our united affections, in promising effort and devotion, yes, in bringing our own selves, to strengthen the wavering defences, if there be but the thought that any are wavering ; nor will we make a condi-

tion save this, that they who labor with us, they by whom we stand shoulder to shoulder, are true, undisguised, undenying lovers of the Union which we would preserve.

Neither you nor I, fellow-citizens, can have any pleasure in analyzing the numbers or the characters of those who do not love the Union. Wherever and whoever they are, whatever their masks or their watchwords, howsoever they call themselves, let us pass them by; the North knows them, the South knows them, the Country knows them; or rather to contradict myself, we do not know them as well as they should be known, nor are we on guard against them as we ought to be. But my purpose is not to speak of them, or of their errors, but to confine myself to points which I would fain see impressed upon ourselves. You may have heard the story of the sailors in a storm, the mate at the bow urging the captain at the helm to change his course, the captain bidding the mate attend to his own end of the vessel, and presently, as he saw things working ill, hailing the mate to know what was the matter. "My end of the vessel," roared the mate, "is at anchor! How's yours?" Fellow-citizens, let us see to it, that in these dark hours, as the breakers thunder before us, our end of the ship is at anchor, calmly riding, however tempestuous the waves. Our moderation may be resented; it will be; but it will have its influence, perhaps the greater in proportion as it is ridiculed or opposed. At any rate, our duty will have been done, and when men can say that, they say what ought to out-weigh a pyramid of criticisms or scoffs from other men.

Pardon me if I go on to speak as one who would lay down the law for his brethren. I speak simply as one of you, I speak for you. It is good, I believe, for those in power, or for those who are struggling after it, to look into the breasts of the men on whose suffrages they are counting, and read a lesson there. Whatever wisdom or strength there may be in high places, the wisdom is not unclouded, the strength is not unaffected by the atmosphere in which they exist, nor are the lives of men in office, as a general rule, favorable to comprehensive views or comprehensive sympathies. We are assembled, I presume, to say a word for ourselves, to declare our sentiments and purposes, let the result be what it may. For myself, as I have no political ambition within me, as there is nothing for me to gain or to lose in the way of place or of authority, I shall venture to speak plainly.

The first duty of northern men, politically speaking, is to tolerate slavery. I do not mean, of course, to tolerate it here, but there where it exists, there where it is likely to exist, whatever we may do or not do. To say that the Constitution prescribes this toleration is not enough; humanity prescribes the same thing, yes, humanity towards the slave himself, in behalf of whom professions are so clamorous around us. We must return to that toleration which once prevailed; nothing less will meet the crisis, nothing more is needed to meet it. And why should we not return?

Are we wiser than our fathers? Material resources have expanded, physical science embraces a wider field and penetrates deeper beneath the surface; letters and arts have thrown fresh lustre on the nation and on the race; but are we wiser, politically wiser than they who framed the Constitution? Is any man of our generation sounder than Washington, or more brilliant than Hamilton? Are we nearer the great source of inspiration from which that generation drew political breath and life, I mean the Common Law of England, the living law of a living people, animated with rights and liberties such as ancient codes never admitted or even conceived, and conveying such hope and energy to those who went before us, that John Adams, one of the most earnest of them all, declared his utter unconcern for the American Revolution if it had severed Americans from their heritage of the Common Law?

Or are we doing more for liberty? Have we labored the night through at Bunker Hill, to fight in the morning without food or without ammunition? Have we marched, bare-footed and bleeding, over the snows, to reach a tentless camp at Valley Forge? Have we been called upon to give up homes, to lose fortunes, to see the father, the son or the brother dying of wounds and privations before our eyes, or have we left wife and sister where we knew that their comfort was gone, and their very existence endangered? Dare we, dare any men, and most of all, those who are filling the air with their exhortations to freedom, dare any men living to say that we are doing, have done, or think of doing more for liberty than our fathers?

Are we more sensitive to slavery? I hear it said that we ought to be, if we are not; and that when keener feeling breaks out in impassioned word or in reckless deed, we ought to respect it, if we cannot share it. All very well; but I doubt if they who compare us with our fathers to our advantage, remember the facts of our history. Have they never read of the long continued struggle of the colonists against the importation of slaves, forced upon them by an unnatural mother-country, a struggle still fresh when the war of the Revolution was at hand? Have they ever gone through the articles of the American Association, organized by the Continental Congress of 1774, when, amid so many crying grievances of a personal and national nature, the delegates found space to declare against the traffic in slaves? Nor is it any abstruse matter, hidden in dusty folios, but a simple fact on the pages of common histories, that a large number of our best men, South as well as North, before and after the Revolution, in the Convention which framed the Constitution, and out of it, were constantly proving their sensitiveness on this subject of domestic slavery. Yet they tolerated it. And are we to refuse to tolerate it?

Why, Mr. President, we make toleration the motto of our country. We tolerate whatever we think good, and I fear I must add, much of what we know to be bad; we tolerate abuses at our own doors, crimes and agonies in our streets, and can we not tolerate

slavery? If it is a wrong, it is not chargeable to us; we did not introduce it, we do not maintain it, and we cannot, if we would, bring it to an end. Toleration of slavery is no harder, nay, it is not half so hard as toleration of many other things against which our anti-slavery countrymen seldom if ever, raise their voices.—But it must be actual toleration; it must honestly and unreservedly let slavery alone; it must not put constitutional duty in the fore-ground, merely to fill up the back-ground with gibes and scornful censures; it must be toleration in word, as well as toleration in deed.

The motive to this, I am still speaking politically, is a very strong one, at least in my own view. For it is no less than the desire, I do not fear to say the necessity, of no longer playing into the hands of fanatics and radicals. Mr. President, I have no political position, and I speak without fear of compromising myself, when I say that we must open our eyes, or we shall soon have them wrenched open, to see the whole power of the government in the possession of men, who have no aim, no hope—if it can be styled a hope,—but to work the horrible ruin of which, if we have ears, we hear them muttering or shrieking every day.

And, oh, if my voice could reach my far-off brethren, who goaded by what to them are injuries of the most unaccountable as of the most oppressive character, are now meditating still greater injuries to themselves and to us, could my words reach them, or could a single phrase of my utterance catch their attention, the one I would most anxiously utter would be the same which I have already expressed. Do not play into the hands of those who rejoice at your course! You think, I would fain continue, that you are chastising them; in reality, you are lifting them to triumph: you fancy that they feel your reproaches and your menaces, but they feel them, only as what they most long to hear.

As I ask for toleration of slavery from the North, so from the South would I ask for toleration of anti-slavery, that is, of the anti-slavery sentiment as well as the anti-slavery expression prevailing through the North. Let our Southern States defend themselves against either the sentiment or the expression, when either is pushed within their borders; let them prevent the journeys of incendiary messengers, and the issues of incendiary documents; but let them tolerate the feeling here which they cannot stifle, let them tolerate the action here which they cannot subdue. Shall I ask them to feel for us, who have fanaticism for our next door neighbor? If things were less serious, I could find it in my heart to dwell on the story of the Scotch mother, who when she heard of her son's captivity in India, where chained to a soldier of the victorious army, he had been transported far into the interior, broke out with the ejaculation, "Eh, I pity the mon that's tied to our David!" Shall I say to our Southern countrymen that there is some pity to be felt for those of us who are tied to Davids here?

But I would appeal to higher principles than any which I have touched upon; I would ask my fellow-countrymen of every section and of every name, to put far from them the distrust and the ill-will that become them not, and to clothe themselves with Christian charity. If my plea is worthless politically, let me make it worth something in another point of view, by resting it upon the precepts that fell from Divine lips to be caught up and enforced by Apostolic authority; let me claim that if we are one in nothing else, we are one in Christianity. And as the surface of the waters may be ploughed and torn with the furrows of the storm, while deep beneath the majestic currents hold their unchanging courses, and the great chain that carries thoughts of peace from land to land lies undisturbed upon its bed; so, though the political seas are heaving with danger and suspicion, there rests deep within the bosom of the whole people, the sublime tranquility of brotherhood, a bond so deeply laid that it cannot be rent asunder.

When Franklin saw the members of the Convention of 1787 signing the Constitution, he pointed to a sun painted on the back of the President's chair, and said: "I have often and often, as I hoped or feared for the issue of this session, looked at that sun without knowing whether it was rising or setting, but now I rejoice to know that it is a rising sun." That sun is still rising; it has not reached its noon-tide, much less the hours of its decline.—If clouds come between it and those on whom its light should fall, they will be dispelled; if from the heavy skies there pours down rain or sleet, it will be stayed; the brightness obscured for a moment will return, and the showers that threatened desolation will be lit up with irresistible radiance; every color of the spectrum, every ray of the Union will mingle in the gracious sign of peace, and beneath it a continent, lulled alike by Atlantic waves and Southern breezes, will rest in love.

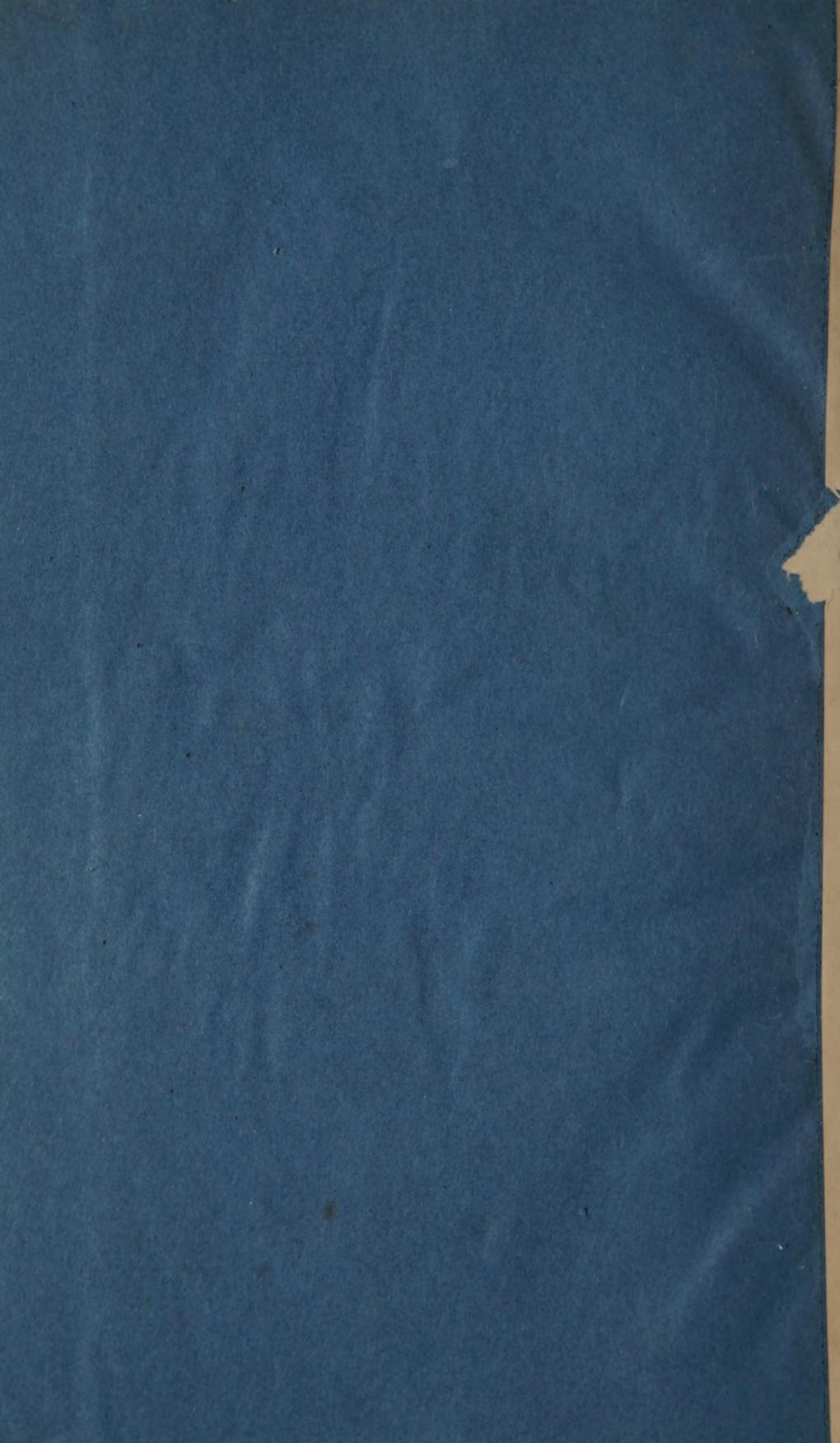
I fear I speak too long, but bear with me as I evoke one more recollection from the past. In that most desperate year of the Revolutionary War, I mean the year 1780, Georgia having been previously lost, and South Carolina being then abandoned, the utter rout of our forces at Camden proving decisive against any immediate recovery, it was gravely proposed to leave the conquered States to their fate; nay, according to the French Minister to our government, the cession of both the Carolinas and of Georgia was in contemplation as the only measure by which the rest of the country could secure its independence. Well, the North might have thought of it, that is—might have had some excuse for thinking of it; Washington himself might have thought of it without staining his honor, for he was hard pressed. Rochambeau, landing at Newport in the summer, wrote home for "troops, ships and money," as it was impossible to "depend upon this people or their means." A little later, fidelity seemed to have taken wing, and Arnold, long admired and confided in, attempted to betray his post to the enemy; ah, when the North was thus slipping from his grasp,

even Washington might have questioned the possibility of defending the South another year or another day. It was then, in the face of so many disheartening circumstances, that he determined on doing whatever could be done towards rescuing the Southern States; and, first of all, on sending thither his best general, Nathaniel Greene of Rhode Island. That was a true mission; that is our example; and if men in arms are still to go from the North to the South, let them be Nathaniel Greenes, and not John Browns! Let the shining blade which leaps from any scabbard, Northern or Southern, upon any portion of our own dear land, bear no device of treason or of murder, but the one true word of Union.

Mr. President, we are generally insensible to our greatest blessings. When they are gone, we mourn for them, but before they go, we do nothing to retain them, nothing perhaps to show that we value them. Every day, we expect the greeting of the morning air, every day we throw open door or window to receive its benediction; and, were it taken from us, were it even darkened or tainted, we should sigh our lives away in vain. Let us see to it that we estimate our political heritage, that we hold fast to it, now that it is still ours, for ourselves, our children and our children's children. If it is of delicate frame-work, if its springs or its pendulums are strained or deranged, it is for us, if we have our reason, to restore the complicated connections. A Constitution like ours was not put together, nor can it be kept in temperate movements without exertion; there will be oscillations and variations; to-day, the time is slow, to-morrow it is fast, forever varying, because forever dependant upon varying conditions and relations. The greater is our responsibility, the more momentous our part in the united effort that the great national horologe, upon whose face the hours are thirty-three, and yet there is space for more, shall still mark, day by day and year by year, a measureless cycle of fidelity to the Union, to country and to countrymen.







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